

William A. Tobey

THE

LOYALTY AND DEVOTION

OF

COLORED AMERICANS

IN THE

REVOLUTION AND WAR OF 1812.

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PATRIOTISM OF COLORED AMERICANS.

AT a Mass Convention of the colored citizens of Ohio, held at Cleveland, Sept. 9th, 1852, the orator of the occasion, WILLIAM H. DAY, Esq., in the course of his address, said:—

“ ‘Of the services and sufferings of the colored soldiers of the Revolution,’ says one writer, ‘no attempt has, to our knowledge, been made to preserve a record.’ This is mainly true. Their history is not written. It lies upon the soil watered with their blood: who shall gather it? It rests with their bones in the charnel-house: who shall exhume it? Their bodies, wrapped in sacks, have dropped from the decks where trod a Decatur and a Barry, in a calm and silence broken only by the voice of the man of God—‘We commit this body to the deep;’ and the plunge and the ripples passing, the sea has closed over their memory forever. Ah! we have waited on shore and have seen the circle of that ripple. We know, at least, where they went down; and so much, to-day, we come to record.

“ We have had in Ohio, until very recently, and if they are living, have here now, a few colored men who have thus connected us with the past. I have been told of one, recently, in the southern portion of the State.

“ Another, of whom we all know, has resided, for many years, near Urbana, Champagne county. He was invited to, and expected at, this meeting. Father Stanup (as he is familiarly called) has lived to a good old age. He has been afflicted with recent sickness, and it may have prostrated him permanently. The frosts of a hundred winters will shrivel

any oak; the blasts of a century will try *any* vitality. The aged soldier must soon die. O, that liberty, for which he fought, might be bequeathed to his descendants! The realization of that idea would smooth his dying pillow, and make the transit from this to another sphere a pleasant passage. I am credibly informed, that the age of Mr. Stanup is one hundred and nine; that he was with General Washington; and that his position, in this respect, has been recognized by officers of the Government."

Further on, Mr. Day said:—"I think we have demonstrated this point, that if colored people are among your Pompeys, and Cuffees, and Uncle Toms, they are also among your heroes. They have been on Lakes Erie and Champlain, upon the Mediterranean, in Florida with the Creeks, at Schuylkill, at Hickory Ground, at New Orleans, at Horse Shoe Bend, and at Pensacola. The presence of some of them here to-day is a living rebuke to this land."

Addressing the large crowd of white citizens present, Mr. Day said:—"We can be, as we have always been, faithful subjects, powerful allies, as the documents read here to-day prove: an enemy in your midst, we would be more powerful still. We ask for liberty; liberty here—liberty on the Chalmette Plains—liberty wherever floats the American flag. We demand for the sons of the men who fought for you, equal privileges. We bring to you, to-day, the tears of our fathers,—each tear is a volume, and speaks to you. To you, then, we appeal. We point you to their blood, sprinkled upon your door-posts in your political midnight, that the Destroying Angel might pass over. We take you to their sepulchres, to see the bond of honor between you and them kept, on their part, faithfully, even until death."

The following extracts from an address delivered, in 1842, before the Congregational and Presbyterian Anti-Slavery Society, at Francestown, N. H., by Dr. Harris, a Revolutionary veteran, will be read with great interest:—

"I sympathize deeply," said Dr. Harris, "in the objects of this Society. I fought, my hearers, for the liberty which you enjoy. It surprises me that every man does not rally at the sound of liberty, and array himself with those who are

laboring to abolish slavery in our country. The very mention of it warms the blood in my veins, and, old as I am, makes me feel something of the spirit and impulses of '76.

“*Then* liberty meant something. Then liberty, independence, freedom, were in every man's mouth. They were the sounds at which they rallied, and under which they fought and bled. They were the words which encouraged and cheered them through their hunger, and nakedness, and fatigue, in cold and in heat. The word slavery then filled their hearts with horror. They fought because they would not be slaves. Those whom liberty has cost nothing, do not know how to prize it.

“I served in the Revolution, in General Washington's army, three years under one enlistment. I have stood in battle where balls, like hail, were flying all around me. The man standing next to me was shot by my side—his blood spouted upon my clothes, which I wore for weeks. My nearest blood, except that which runs in my veins, was shed for liberty. My only brother was shot dead instantly in the Revolution. Liberty is dear to my heart; I cannot endure the thought that my countrymen should be slaves.

“When stationed in the State of Rhode Island, the regiment to which I belonged was once ordered to what was called a flanking position,—that is, upon a place which the enemy must pass in order to come round in our rear, to drive us from the fort. This pass was every thing, both to them and to us; of course, it was a post of imminent danger. They attacked us with great fury, but were repulsed. They reinforced, and attacked us again, with more vigor and determination, and again were repulsed. Again they reinforced, and attacked us the third time, with the most desperate courage and resolution, but a third time were repulsed. The contest was fearful. Our position was hotly disputed and as hotly maintained.

“But I have another object in view in stating these facts. I would not be trumpeting my own acts; the only reason why I have named myself in connection with this transaction is, to show that I know whereof I affirm. There was a *black* regiment in the same situation. Yes, a regiment of *negroes*, fighting for *our* liberty and independence,—not a white man among them but the officers,—stationed in this same danger-

ous and responsible position. Had they been unfaithful, or given way before the enemy, all would have been lost. *Three times in succession* were they attacked, with most desperate valor and fury, by well disciplined and veteran troops, and *three times* did they successfully repel the assault, and thus preserve our army from capture. They fought through the war. They were brave, hardy troops. They helped to gain our liberty and independence.

“Now, the war is over, our freedom is gained — what is to be done with these colored soldiers, who have shed their best blood in its defence? Must they be sent off out of the country, because they are black? or must they be sent back into slavery, now they have risked their lives and shed their blood to secure the freedom of their masters? I ask, what became of these noble colored soldiers? Many of them, I fear, were taken back to the South, and doomed to the fetter and the chain.

“And why is it, that the colored inhabitants of our nation, born in this country, and entitled to all the rights of freemen, are held in slavery? Why, but because they are *black*? I have often thought that, should God see fit, by a miracle, to change their color, straighten their hair, and give their features and complexion the appearance of the whites, slavery would not continue a year. No, you would then go and abolish it with the *sword*, if it were not speedily done without. But is it a suitable cause for making men slaves, because God has given them such a color, such hair and such features, as he saw fit?”

Dr. Clarke, in the Convention which revised the Constitution of New York, in 1821, speaking of the colored inhabitants of the State, said:—

“My honorable colleague has told us, that, as the colored people are not required to contribute to the protection or defence of the State, they are not entitled to an equal participation in the privileges of its citizens. But, Sir, whose fault is this? Have they ever refused to do military duty when called upon? It is haughtily asked, Who will stand in the ranks shoulder to shoulder with a negro? I answer, No one, in time of peace; no one, when your musters and trainings

are looked upon as mere pastimes; no one, when your militia will shoulder their muskets and march to their trainings with as much unconcern as they would go to a sumptuous entertainment or a splendid ball. But, Sir, when the hour of danger approaches, your white 'militia' are just as willing that the man of color should be set up as a mark to be shot at by the enemy, as to be set up themselves. In the War of the Revolution, these people helped to fight your battles by land and by sea. Some of your States were glad to turn out corps of colored men, and to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with them.

"In your late war, they contributed largely towards some of your most splendid victories. On Lakes Erie and Champlain, where your fleets triumphed over a foe superior in numbers and engines of death, they were manned, in a large proportion, with men of color. And, in this very house, in the fall of 1814, a bill passed, receiving the approbation of all the branches of your government, authorizing the Governor to accept the services of a corps of two thousand free people of color. Sir, these were times which tried men's souls. In these times, it was no sporting matter to bear arms. These were times, when a man who shouldered his musket did not know but he bared his bosom to receive a death wound from the enemy ere he laid it aside; and, in these times, these people were found as ready and as willing to volunteer in your service as any other. They were not compelled to go; they were not drafted. No; your pride had placed them beyond your compulsory power. But there was no necessity for its exercise; they were volunteers; yes, Sir, volunteers to defend that very country from the inroads and ravages of a ruthless and vindictive foe, which had treated them with insult, degradation and slavery.

"Volunteers are the best of soldiers. Give me the men, whatever be their complexion, that willingly volunteer, and not those who are compelled to turn out. Such men do not fight from necessity, nor from mercenary motives, but from principle."

The Hon. Tristram Burges, of Rhode Island, in a speech in Congress, January, 1828, said:—"At the commencement of the Revolutionary War, Rhode Island had a number of

slaves. A regiment of them were enlisted into the Continental service, and no braver men met the enemy in battle; but not one of them was permitted to be a soldier until he had first been made a freeman."

"In Rhode Island," says Governor Eustis, in his able speech against slavery in Missouri, 12th December, 1820, "the blacks formed an entire regiment, and they discharged their duty with zeal and fidelity. The gallant defence of Red Bank, in which the black regiment bore a part, is among the proofs of their valor."

In this contest, it will be recollected that four hundred men met and repulsed, after a terrible and sanguinary struggle, fifteen hundred Hessian troops, headed by Count Donop. The glory of the defence of Red Bank, which has been pronounced one of the most heroic actions of the war, belongs in reality to black men; yet who now hears them spoken of in connection with it? Among the traits which distinguished the black regiment was devotion to their officers. In the attack made upon the American lines, near Croton river, on the 13th of May, 1781, Col. Greene, the commander of the regiment, was cut down and mortally wounded; but the sabres of the enemy only reached him through the bodies of his faithful guard of blacks, who gathered around him to protect him, *and every one of whom was killed.*

The celebrated Charles Pinckney, of South Carolina, in his speech on the Missouri question, and in defence of the slave representation of the South, made the following admissions:—

"At the commencement of our Revolutionary struggle with Great Britain, all the States had this class of people. The New England States had numbers of them; the Northern and Middle States had still more, although less than the Southern. *They all entered into the great contest with similar views. Like brethren, they contended for the benefit of the whole,* leaving to each the right to pursue its happiness in its own way. They thus nobly toiled and bled together, *really like brethren.* And it is a remarkable fact, that, notwithstanding, in the course of the Revolution, the Southern States were continually overrun by the British, and every

negro in them had an opportunity of running away, yet few did. They then were, as they still are, as valuable a part of our population to the Union as any other equal number of inhabitants. They were in numerous instances the pioneers, and in all, the laborers of your armies. *To their hands were owing the erection of the greatest part of the fortifications raised for the protection of our country.* Fort Moultrie gave, at an early period of the inexperience and untried valor of our citizens, immortality to American arms. And in the Northern States, numerous bodies of them were enrolled, and fought, *side-by-side with the whites*, the battles of the Revolution."

Said Martindale, of New York, in Congress, 22d of January, 1828:—"Slaves, or negroes who had been slaves, were enlisted as soldiers in the War of the Revolution; and I myself saw a battalion of them, as fine martial-looking men as I ever saw, attached to the Northern army, in the last war, on its march from Plattsburg to Sackett's Harbor."

The *Burlington Gazette* gives the following account of an aged colored resident of that city, which will be read with much interest:—

"The attention of many of our citizens has, doubtless, been arrested by the appearance of an old colored man, who might have been seen, sitting in front of his residence, in East Union street, respectfully raising his hat to those who might be passing by. His attenuated frame, his silvered head, his feeble movements, combine to prove that he is very aged; and yet, comparatively few are aware that he is among the survivors of the gallant army who fought for the liberties of our country, 'in the days which tried men's souls.'

"On Monday last, we stopped to speak to him, and asked him how old he was. He asked the day of the month, and, upon being told that it was the 24th of May, replied, with trembling lips, 'I am very old—I am a hundred years old to-day.'

"His name is Oliver Cromwell, and he says that he was born at the Black Horse, (now Columbus,) in this county, in the family of John Hutchin. He enlisted in a company commanded by Capt. Lowery, attached to the Second New

Jersey Regiment, under the command of Col. Israel Shreve. He was at the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Monmouth, and Yorktown, at which latter place, he told us, he saw the last man killed. Although his faculties are failing, yet he relates many interesting reminiscences of the Revolution. He was with the army at the retreat of the Delaware, on the memorable crossing of the 25th of December, 1776, and relates the story of the battles on the succeeding days with enthusiasm. He gives the details of the march from Trenton to Princeton, and told us, with much humor, that they 'knocked the British about lively' at the latter place. He was also at the battle of Springfield, and says that he saw the house burning in which Mrs. Caldwell was shot, at Connecticut Farms."

I further learn, (says the author of "The Colored Patriots of the Revolution,") that Cromwell was brought up a farmer, having served his time with Thomas Hutchins, Esq., his maternal uncle. He was, for six years and nine months, under the immediate command of Washington, whom he loved affectionately. "His discharge," says Dr. M'Cune Smith, "at the close of the war, was in Washington's own hand-writing, of which he was very proud, often speaking of it. He received, annually, ninety-six dollars pension. He lived a long and honorable life. Had he been of a little lighter complexion, (he was just half white,) every newspaper in the land would have been eloquent in praise of his many virtues."

Jack Grove, of Portland, while steward of a brig, sailing from the West Indies to Portland, in 1812, was taken by a French vessel, whose commander placed a guard on board. Jack urged his commander to make an effort to retake the vessel, but the captain saw no hope. Says Jack, "Captain McLellan, I can take her, if you will let me go ahead." The captain checked him, warning him not to lisp such a word,—there was danger in it; but Jack, disappointed, though not daunted, rallied the men on his own hook. Captain McLellan and the rest, inspired by his example, finally joined them, and the attempt resulted in victory. They weighed anchor, and took the vessel into Portland,

FORMATION OF A COLORED REGIMENT IN RHODE ISLAND.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, IN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY. February Session, 1778.

Whereas, for the preservation of the rights and liberties of the United States, it is necessary that the whole power of Government should be exerted in recruiting the Continental battalions; and, whereas, His Excellency, General Washington, hath inclosed to this State a proposal made to him by Brigadier General Varnum, to enlist into the two battalions raising by this State such slaves as should be willing to enter into the service; and, whereas, history affords us frequent precedents of the wisest, the freest and bravest nations having liberated their slaves and enlisted them as soldiers to fight in defence of their country; and also, whereas, the enemy have, with great force, taken possession of the capital and of a great part of this State, and this State is obliged to raise a very considerable number of troops for its own immediate defence, whereby it is in a manner rendered impossible for this State to furnish recruits for the said two battalions without adopting the said measures so recommended, —

It is Voted and Resolved, That every able-bodied negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave in this State may enlist into either of the said two battalions, to serve during the continuance of the present war with Great Britain;—That every slave so enlisting shall be entitled to and receive all the bounties, wages and encouragements allowed by the Continental Congress to any soldiers enlisting into this service.

It is further Voted and Resolved, That every slave so enlisting shall, upon his passing muster by Col. Christopher Greene, be immediately discharged from the service of his master or mistress, and be absolutely free, as though he had never been incumbered with any kind of servitude or slavery. And in case such slave shall, by sickness or otherwise, be rendered unable to maintain himself, he shall not be chargeable to his master or mistress, but shall be supported at the expense of the State.

And, whereas, slaves have been by the laws deemed the property of their owners, and therefore compensation ought to be made to the owners for the loss of their service,—

It is further Voted and Resolved, That there be allowed and paid by this State to the owners, for every such slave so enlisting, a sum according to his worth, at a price not exceeding one hundred and twenty pounds for the most valuable slave, and in proportion for a slave of less value,—provided the owner of said slave shall deliver up to the officer who shall enlist him the clothes of the said slave, or otherwise he shall not be entitled to said sum.

And for settling and ascertaining the value of such slaves,—It is further Voted and Resolved, That a committee of five shall be appointed, to wit,—one from each county, any three of whom to be a quorum,—to examine the slaves who shall be so enlisted, after they shall have passed muster, and to set a price upon each slave, according to his value as aforesaid.

It is further Voted and Resolved, That upon any able-bodied negro, mulatto or Indian slave enlisting as aforesaid, the officer who shall so enlist him, after he has passed muster as aforesaid, shall deliver a certificate thereof to the master or mistress of said negro, mulatto, or Indian slave, which shall discharge him from the service of said master or mistress.

It is further Voted and Resolved, That the committee who shall estimate the value of the slave aforesaid, shall give a certificate of the sum at which he may be valued to the owner of said slave, and the general treasurer of this State is hereby empowered and directed to give unto the owner of said slave his promissory note for the sum of money at which he shall be valued as aforesaid, payable on demand, with interest,—which shall be paid with the money from Congress.

A true copy, examined,

HENRY WARD, *Sec'y.*

Among the brave blacks who fought in the battles for American liberty was Major Jeffrey, a Tennessean, who, during the campaign of Major-General Andrew Jackson in Mobile, filled the place of "regular" among the soldiers. In the charge made by General Stump against the enemy, the Americans were repulsed and thrown into disorder,—Major Stump being forced to retire, in a manner by no means desirable, under the circumstances. Major Jeffrey, who was but a common soldier, seeing the condition of his comrades, and

comprehending the disastrous results about to befall them, rushed forward, mounted a horse, took command of the troops, and, by an heroic effort, rallied them to the charge, — completely routing the enemy, who left the Americans masters of the field. He at once received from the General the title of “Major,” though he could not, according to the American policy, so commission him. To the day of his death, he was known by that title in Nashville, where he resided, and the circumstances which entitled him to it were constantly the subject of popular conversation.

Major Jeffrey was highly respected by the whites generally, and revered, in his own neighborhood, by all the colored people who knew him.

A few years ago, receiving an indignity from a common ruffian, he was forced to strike him in self-defence; for which act, in accordance with the laws of slavery in that, as well as many other of the slave States, he was compelled to receive, on his naked person, *nine and thirty lashes with a raw hide!* This, at the age of seventy odd, after the distinguished services rendered his country, — probably when the white ruffian for whom he was tortured was unable to raise an arm in its defence, — was more than he could bear; *it broke his heart*, and he sank to rise no more, till summoned by the blast of the last trumpet to stand on the battle-field of the general resurrection.

Lieutenant-Colonel Barton, of the Rhode Island militia, planned a bold exploit for the purpose of surprising and taking Major-General Prescott, the commanding officer of the royal army at Newport. Taking with him, in the night, about forty men, in two boats, with oars muffled, he had the address to elude the vigilance of the ships of war and guard boats, and, having arrived undiscovered at the General's quarters, they were taken for the sentinels, and the General was not alarmed till his captors were at the door of his lodging chamber, which was fast closed. A negro man, named Prince, instantly thrust his head through the panel door, and seized the victim while in bed. The General's aid-de-camp leaped from a window undressed, and attempted to escape, but was taken, and, with the General, brought off in safety.*

* Thacher's Military Journal, August 3, 1777.

Swett, in his "Sketches of Bunker Hill Battle," alludes to the presence of a colored man in that fight. He says:— "Major Pitcairn caused the first effusion of blood at Lexington. In that battle, his horse was shot under him, while he was separated from his troops. With presence of mind, he feigned himself slain; his pistols were taken from his holsters, and he was left for dead, when he seized the opportunity, and escaped. He appeared at Bunker Hill, and, says the historian, 'Among those who mounted the works was the gallant Major Pitcairn, who exultingly cried out, "*The day is ours!*" when a black soldier named Salem shot him through, and he fell. His agonized son received him in his arms, and tenderly bore him to the boats.' A contribution was made in the army for the colored soldier, and he was presented to Washington as having performed this feat."

Besides Salem, there were quite a number of colored soldiers at Bunker Hill. Among them, Titus Coburn, Alexander Ames, and Barzilai Lew, all of Andover; and also Cato Howe, of Plymouth—each of whom received a pension.

Samuel Charlton was born in the State of New Jersey, a slave, in the family of Mr. M., who owned, also, other members belonging to his family—all residing in the English neighborhood. During the progress of the war, he was placed by his master (as a substitute for himself) in the army then in New Jersey, as a teamster in the baggage train. He was in active service at the battle of Monmouth, not only witnessing, but taking a part in, the struggle of that day. He was also in several other engagements in different sections of that part of the State. He was a great admirer of General Washington, and was, at one time, attached to his baggage train, and received the General's commendation for his courage and devotion to the cause of liberty. Mr. Charlton was about fifteen or seventeen years of age when placed in the army, for which his master rewarded him with a silver dollar. At the expiration of his time, he returned to his master, to serve again in bondage, after having toiled, fought and bled for liberty, in common with the regular soldiery. Mr. M., at his death, by will, liberated his slaves, and provided a pension for Charlton, to be paid during his lifetime.

Quack Matrick, of Stoughton Corner, was a regular Revolutionary soldier, and drew a pension.

In the engravings of Washington crossing the Delaware, on the evening previous to the battle of Trenton, Dec. 25th, 1779, a colored soldier is seen, on horseback, quite prominent, near the Commander-in-Chief, — the same figure that, in other sketches, is seen pulling the stroke oar in that memorable crossing. This colored soldier was Prince Whipple, body-guard to Gen. Whipple,* of New Hampshire, who was Aid to General Washington.

The names of the two brave men of color who fell, with Ledyard, at the storming of Fort Griswold, were Lambo Latham and Jordan Freeman. When Major Montgomery, one of the leaders in the expedition against the Americans, was lifted upon the walls of the fort by his soldiers, flourishing his sword and calling on them to follow him, Jordan Freeman received him on the point of a pike, and pinned him dead to the earth.

Ebenezer Hills died at Vienna, New York, August, 1849, aged one hundred and ten. He was born a slave, in Stonington, Connecticut, and became free when twenty-eight years of age. He served through the Revolutionary War, and was at the battles of Saratoga and Stillwater, and was present at the surrender of Burgoyne.

In Washington's Will, special provision is made for his "mulatto man William, calling himself William Lee," granting him his immediate freedom, an annuity of thirty dollars during his natural life, or support, if he preferred (being incapable of walking or any active employment) to remain with the family. "This I give him," says Washington, "as a testimony of my sense of his attachment to me, and for *his faithful services during the Revolutionary War.*"

Simon Lee, the grandfather of William Wells Brown, on his mother's side, was a slave in Virginia, and served in the War of the Revolution. Although honorably discharged, with the other Virginia troops, at the close of the war, he was sent back to his master, where he spent the remainder of his life toiling on a tobacco plantation.

Jonathan Overton, (says the *Edenton Whig*,) a colored man, and a soldier of the Revolution, died at this place, at the advanced age of one hundred and one years. The deceased served under Washington, and was at the battle of Yorktown, besides other less important engagements. He

was deservedly held in great respect by our citizens; for, apart from the feeling of veneration which every American must entertain for the scanty remnant of Revolutionary heroes, of which death is fast depriving us, the deceased was personally worthy of the esteem and consideration of our community. He has lived among us longer than the ordinary period allotted to human life, and always sustained a character for honesty, industry, and integrity.

James Easton, of Bridgewater, a colored man, participated in the erection of the fortifications on Dorchester Heights, under command of Washington, which the next morning so greatly surprised the British soldiers then encamped in Boston.

Job Lewis, of Lancaster, (formerly a slave,) enlisted for two terms of three years each; and a third time for the remainder of the war. He died in November, 1797.

Prince Richards, of East Bridgewater, was a pensioned Revolutionary soldier.

Thomas Hollen, of Dorset county, Maryland, was in the Revolutionary War, attached to the regiment of Col. Charles Gouldsbury, and was wounded by a musket ball in the calf of his leg. He died in 1816, aged seventy two, at the town of Blackwood, N. J., and was buried in the Snowhill churchyard, east of Woodbury.

The Legislature of Virginia, in 1783, emancipated several slaves who had fought in the Revolutionary War, and the example was followed by some individuals, who wished to exhibit a consistency of conduct rare even in those early days of our country's history. The Baltimore papers of September 8th, 1790, make mention of the fact that Hon. General Gates, before taking his departure, with his lady, for their new and elegant seat on the banks of the East River, summoned his numerous family and slaves about him, and, amidst their tears of affection and gratitude, gave them their freedom; and, what was still better, made provision that their liberty should be a blessing to them.

During the Revolutionary War, the Legislature of New York passed an Act granting freedom to all slaves who should serve in the army for three years, or until regularly discharged. (See 1 Kent's Com., p. 255.)

Rev. Theodore Parker, in a letter to the author of "The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution," says:—

"Not long ago, while the excavations for the vaults of the great retail dry goods store of New York were going on, a gentleman from Boston noticed a large quantity of human bones thrown up by the workmen. Everybody knows the African countenance: the skulls also bore unmistakable marks of the race they belonged to. They were shovelled up with the earth which they had rested in, carted off and emptied into the sea to fill up a chasm, and make the foundation of a warehouse.

"On inquiry, the Bostonian learned that these were the bones of colored American soldiers, who fell in the disastrous battles of Long Island, in 1776, and of such as died of the wounds then received. At that day, as at this, spite of the declaration that 'all men are created equal,' the prejudice against the colored man was intensely strong. The black and the white had fought against the same enemy, under the same banner, contending for the same 'unalienable right' to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The same shot with promiscuous slaughter had mowed down Africans and Americans. But in the grave, they must be divided. On the battle-field, the blacks and whites had mixed their bravery and their blood, but their ashes must not mingle in the bosom of their common mother. The white Saxon, exclusive and haughty even in his burial, must have his place of rest proudly apart from the grave of the African he had once enslaved.

"Now, after seventy-five years have passed by, the bones of these forgotten victims of the Revolution are shovelled up by Irish laborers, carted off, and shot into the sea, as the rubbish of the town. Had they been white men's relics, how would they have been honored with sumptuous burial anew, and the purchased prayers and preaching of Christian divines! Now, they are the rubbish of the street!

"True, they were the bones of Revolutionary soldiers,—but they were black men; and shall a city that kidnaps its citizens, honor a negro with a grave? What boots it that he fought for our freedom; that he bled for our liberty; that he died for you and me? Does the 'nigger' deserve a tomb? Ask the American State—the American Church!

“Three quarters of a century have passed by since the retreat from Long Island. What a change since then! From the Washington of that day to the world’s Washington of this, what a change! In America, what alterations! What a change in England! The Briton has emancipated every bondman; slavery no longer burns his soil on either Continent, the East or West. America has a population of slaves greater than the people of all England in the reign of Elizabeth. Under the pavement of Broadway, beneath the walls of the Bazaar, there still lie the bones of the colored martyrs to American Independence. Dandies of either sex swarm gaily over the threshold, heedless of the dead African, contemptuous of the living. And while these faithful bones were getting shovelled up and carted to the sea, there was a great slave-hunt in New York: a man was kidnapped and carried off to bondage by the citizens, at the instigation of politicians, and to the sacramental delight of ‘divines.’

“Happy are the dead Africans, whom British shot mowed down! They did not live to see a man kidnapped in the city which their blood helped free.”

The poor requital for the colored man’s valor was forcibly alluded to by Henry H. Garnet at the anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Society, in New York city, May, 1840. “It is with pride,” said he, “that I remember, that in the earliest attempts to establish democracy in this hemisphere, colored men stood by the side of your fathers, and shared with them the toils of the Revolution. When Freedom, that had been chased over half the world, at last thought she had here found a shelter, and held out her hands for protection, the tearful eye of the colored man, in many instances, gazed with pity upon her tattered garments, and ran to her relief. Many fell in her defence, and the grateful soil received them affectionately into its bosom. No monumental piles distinguish their ‘dreamless beds’; scarcely an inch on the page of history has been appropriated to their memory; yet truth will give them a share of the fame that was reaped upon the fields of Lexington and Bunker Hill; truth will affirm that they participated in the immortal honor that adorned the brow of the illustrious Washington.”

GEN. JACKSON'S PROCLAMATION.

"HEADQUARTERS, SEVENTH MILITARY DISTRICT, }
MOBILE, September 21, 1814. }

"To the Free Colored Inhabitants of Louisiana :

Through a mistaken policy, you have been heretofore deprived of a participation in the glorious struggle for national rights in which our country is engaged. This no longer shall exist.

As sons of freedom, you are now called upon to defend our most inestimable blessing. As Americans, your country looks with confidence to her adopted children for a valorous support, as a faithful return for the advantages enjoyed under her mild and equitable government. As fathers, husbands, and brothers, you are summoned to rally around the standard of the eagle to defend all which is dear in existence.

Your country, although calling for your exertions, does not wish you to engage in her cause without remunerating you for the services rendered. Your intelligent minds are not to be led away by false representations. Your love of honor would cause you to despise the man who should attempt to deceive you. With the sincerity of a soldier and the language of truth I address you.

To every noble-hearted freeman of color volunteering to serve during the present contest with Great Britain, and no longer, there will be paid the same bounty, in money and lands, now received by the white soldiers of the United States, viz: one hundred and twenty-four dollars in money, and one hundred and sixty acres of land. The non-commissioned officers and privates will also be entitled to the same monthly pay, daily rations and clothes furnished to any American soldier.

On enrolling yourselves in companies, the Major-General commanding will select officers for your government from your white fellow-citizens. Your non-commissioned officers will be appointed from among yourselves.

Due regard will be paid to the feelings of freemen and soldiers. You will not, by being associated with white men in the same corps, be exposed to improper comparison or

unjust sarcasm. As a distinct, independent battalion or regiment, pursuing the path of glory, you will, undivided, receive the applause and gratitude of your countrymen.

To assure you of the sincerity of my intentions, and my anxiety to engage your invaluable services to our country, I have communicated my wishes to the Governor of Louisiana, who is fully informed as to the manner of enrolments, and will give you every necessary information on the subject of this address.

ANDREW JACKSON,

Major-General Commanding.

December 18, 1814, General Jackson issued, in the French language, the following address to the colored members of his army:—

“SOLDIERS!—When, on the banks of the Mobile, I called you to take up arms, inviting you to partake the perils and glory of your white fellow-citizens, I expected much from you; for I was not ignorant that you possessed qualities most formidable to an invading enemy. I knew with what fortitude you could endure hunger and thirst, and all the fatigues of a campaign. *I knew well how you loved your native country*, and that you, as well as ourselves, had to defend what *man* holds most dear—his parents, wife, children, and property. *You have done more than I expected.* In addition to the previous qualities I before knew you to possess, I found among you a noble enthusiasm, which leads to the performance of great things.

“Soldiers! the President of the United States shall hear how praiseworthy was your conduct in the hour of danger, and the representatives of the American people will give you the praise your exploits entitle you to. Your General anticipates them in applauding your noble ardor.

“The enemy approaches; his vessels cover our lakes; our brave citizens are united, and all contention has ceased among them. Their only dispute is, who shall win the prize of valor, or who the most glory, its noblest reward.

“By order,

“THOMAS BUTLER, *Aid-de-Camp.*”

The New Orleans *Picayune*, in an account of the celebration of the Battle of New Orleans, in that city, in 1851, says:—

“Not the least interesting, although the most novel feature of the procession yesterday, was the presence of ninety of the colored veterans who bore a conspicuous part in the dangers of the day they were now for the first time called to assist in celebrating, and who, by their good conduct in presence of the enemy, deserved and received the approbation of their illustrious commander-in-chief. During the thirty-six years that have passed away since they assisted to repel the invaders from our shores, these faithful men have never before participated in the annual rejoicings for the victory which their valor contributed to gain. Their good deeds have been consecrated only in their memories, or lived but to claim a passing notice on the page of the historian. Yet, who more than they deserve the thanks of the country, and the gratitude of succeeding generations? Who rallied with more alacrity in response to the summons of danger? Who endured more cheerfully the hardships of the camp, or faced with greater courage the perils of the fight? If, in that hazardous hour, when our homes were menaced with the horrors of war, we did not disdain to call upon the colored population to assist in repelling the invading horde, we should not, when the danger is past, refuse to permit them to unite with us in celebrating the glorious event, which they helped to make so memorable an epoch in our history. We were not too exalted to mingle with them in the affray; they were not too humble to join in our rejoicings.

“Such, we think, is the universal opinion of our citizens. We conversed with many yesterday, and, without exception, they expressed approval of the invitation which had been extended to the colored veterans to take part in the ceremonies of the day, and gratification at seeing them in a conspicuous place in the procession.

“The respectability of their appearance, and the modesty of their demeanor, made an impression on every observer, and elicited unqualified approbation. Indeed, though in saying so we do not mean disrespect to any one else, we think that they constituted decidedly the most interesting portion of the pageant, as they certainly attracted the most attention.”

The editor, after further remarks upon the procession, and adding of its colored members, "We reflected, that beneath their dark bosoms were sheltered faithful hearts, susceptible of the noblest impulses," thus alludes to the free colored population of New Orleans:—

"As a class, they are peaceable, orderly, and respectable people, and many of them own large amounts of property among us. Their interests, their homes, and their affections are here, and such strong ties are not easily broken by the force of theoretical philanthropy, or imaginative sentimentality. They have been true hitherto, and we will not do them the injustice to doubt a continuance of their fidelity. While they may be certain that insubordination will be promptly punished, deserving actions will always meet with their due reward in the esteem and gratitude of the community."

Yet, if five, even of these veterans, should at any time be seen talking together, they are liable to be arrested for conspiracy, according to the laws of Louisiana!

Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, in his speech in Congress, on the Imprisonment of Colored Seamen, September, 1850, bore this testimony to the gallant conduct of the colored soldiers at New Orleans:—

"I have an impression that, not, indeed, in these piping times of peace, but in the time of war, when quite a boy, I have seen black soldiers enlisted, who did faithful and excellent service. But, however it may have been in the Northern States, I can tell the Senator what happened in the Southern States at this period. I believe that I shall be borne out in saying, that no regiments did better service, at New Orleans, than did the black regiments, which were organized under the direction of General Jackson himself, after a most glorious appeal to the patriotism and honor of the people of color of that region; and which, after they came out of the war, received the thanks of General Jackson, in a proclamation which has been thought worthy of being inscribed on the pages of history."

Chalmette Plains, the scene of the famous Battle of New Orleans, are five miles below that city, on the left bank of the

Mississippi. There is an elaborate engraving of this battle, eighteen by twenty inches, executed by M. Hyacinth Laclotte, the correctness of which was certified to by eleven of the superior officers residing in New Orleans, July 15, 1815, when the drawing was completed.

The report "No. 8," from the American Army, corroborates the following interesting statements, which were furnished to the author of "The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution" by Wm. H. Day, Esq., of Cleveland:—

"From an authenticated chart, belonging to a soldier friend, I find that, in the Battle of New Orleans, Major-General Andrew Jackson, Commander-in-Chief, and his staff, were just at the right of the advancing left column of the British, and that very near him were stationed the colored soldiers. He is numbered 6, and the position of the colored soldiers, 8. The chart explanation of No. 8 reads thus:— '8. Captains Dominique and Bluche, two 24 pounders; Major Lacoste's battalion, formed of the men of color of New Orleans, and Major Daquin's battalion, formed of the men of color of St. Domingo, under Major Savary, second in command.'

"They occupied no mean place, and did no mean service.

"From other documents in my possession, I am able to state the number of the 'battalion of St. Domingo men of color' to have been one hundred and fifty; and of 'Major Lacoste's battalion of Louisiana men of color,' two hundred and eighty.

"Thus were over four hundred 'men of color' in that battle. When it is remembered that the whole number of soldiers claimed by Americans to have been in that battle reached only 3,600, it will be seen that the 'men of color' were present in much larger proportion than their numbers in the country warranted.

"Neither was there colorphobia then. Major Planche's battalion of uniformed volunteer companies, and Major Lacoste's 'men of color,' wrought together; so, also, did Major Daquin's 'men of color,' and the 44th, under Captain Baker.

"Great Britain had her colored soldiers in that battle; the United States had hers. Great Britain's became free-men and citizens: those of the United States continued only half-free and slaves."

During the war of 1812, Capt. Perry, writing to Commodore Chauncy, the senior officer, said—"The men that came by Mr. Champlin are a motley set—blacks, soldiers, and boys. *I am, however, pleased to see any thing in the shape of a man.*" The following letter was sent by Commodore Chauncy in reply:—

"ON BOARD THE PIKE, OFF BURLINGTON BAY, }
July 13th. }

"SIR,—I have been duly honored with your letters of the 23d and 26th ultimo, and notice your anxiety for men and officers. I am equally anxious to furnish you, and no time shall be lost in sending officers and men to you, as soon as the public service will allow me to send them from this lake. I regret that you are not pleased with the men sent you by Messrs. Champlin and Forrest; for, to my knowledge, a part of them are not surpassed by any seamen we have in the fleets; and I have yet to learn that the color of the skin, or the cut and trimmings of the coat, can affect a man's qualifications or usefulness. *I have nearly fifty blacks on board this ship, and many of them are among my best men;* and those people you call soldiers have been to sea from two to seventeen years, and I presume that you will find them as good and useful as any men on board of your vessel; at least, if I can judge by comparison, for those which we have on board this ship are attentive and obedient, and, as far as I can judge, many of them excellent seamen; at any rate, the men sent to Lake Erie have been selected with a view of sending a fair proportion of petty officers and seamen, and I presume, upon examination, it will be found they are equal to those upon this lake."

During the Dorr excitement, the colored population of Rhode Island received high encomiums from the papers of the State for their conduct. The *New York Courier and Enquirer* said:—"The colored people of Rhode Island deserve the good opinion and kind feeling of every citizen of the State, for their conduct during the recent troublous times in Providence. They promptly volunteered their services for any duty to which they might be useful in maintaining law and order. Upwards of a hundred organized themselves for the purpose of acting as a city guard for the protection of the city, and to extinguish fires, in case of their occurrence, while the citizens were absent on military duty. The fathers of these people were distinguished for their patriotism and bravery in the war of the Revolution, and the Rhode Island colored regiment fought, on one occasion, until half their number were slain. There was not a regiment in the service which did more soldierly duty, or showed itself more devotedly patriotic."